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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 2235  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE 3325  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE 8901  
RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA IMMEDIATE 7856  
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA IMMEDIATE 0205  
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE IMMEDIATE 1667  
RUEHKS/AMCONSUL SAPPORO IMMEDIATE 8362  
RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI IMMEDIATE 7539  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 002822

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [JA](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR ROOS'S MEETING WITH MINISTER MAEHARA

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Classified By: Ambassador John V. Roos, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S/NF) Summary: During a one-hour meeting, Minister Maehara outlined the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) government's plan to ultimately accept the existing Futenma relocation plan, with or without the support of its coalition partners. Maehara cautioned that his government must first pass the 2010 budget, and that late April to early May was when the DPJ could forge ahead with the Futenma plan even if it meant breaking up their coalition with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and People's New Party (PNP). Maehara said that Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada will deliver this message to the USG at an unspecified date. (Note: The Ambassador promised Maehara we would keep close the following information so please protect. End Note) End Summary.

¶2. (S/NF) Ambassador Roos met Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism and State Minister for Okinawa, Northern Territories, and Disaster Prevention Seiji Maehara on December 9 at the Ambassador's Residence. Maehara told the Ambassador that five DPJ cabinet members (Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hirano, Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa, and Maehara) met on the evening of December 8 and agreed that they could not accept moving forward with the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) because of opposition from the DPJ's coalition partner, the Social Democratic Party (SDP). However, Maehara said, CCS Hirano was tasked with working to get SDP and the DPJ's other coalition partner, the People's New Party (PNP), on board with the following four points of a "plan of action" regarding the FRF:

1: The GOJ would continue with the environmental impact survey for the FRF plan at Henoko.

2: The DPJ government would earmark funds needed to fund FRF in the upcoming budget based on the premise that relocation to Henoko would happen (to be called "yobi yosan," or "reserve budget").

3: The GOJ would explore "alternative options" to the existing FRF plan that are acceptable to both the U.S. and

Okinawan people. The coalition partners would be involved in this process. (Note: We have heard that the DPJ does not expect USG involvement in this process of eliminating alternatives. End Note)

4: If no alternative options are accepted, then SDP and PNP would agree to accept the Henoko option. The two coalition parties would have to agree to be responsible for this coalition decision.

13. (S/NF) Maehara continued that even if the SDP and PNP do not agree to this four-point plan now, once the DPJ coalition government passes the 2010 budget and other budget-related bills, it will be closer to the Upper House election and because the DPJ values the U.S.-Japan alliance, it could then drop the SDP and PNP from its coalition before the election. People have been criticizing the two smaller parties, saying they voted for the DPJ, not the SDP or PNP, Maehara pointed out. Thus, it could be politically advantageous for the DPJ to drop the two parties.

14. (S/NF) Under this scenario, if the U.S. does not agree to any alternative to the existing FRF plan, the DPJ would be prepared to go ahead with the current relocation plan and let the coalition break up if necessary after Golden Week (April 29 to May 5 in 2010).

15. (S/NF) The Nago City election in Okinawa is likely to be won by a candidate opposing the current relocation plan, but it's not the Nago mayor who would grant permission for the landfill project, Maehara reminded the Ambassador. Instead, it would be the Governor of Okinawa who would sign the agreement.

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16. (S/NF) Ambassador Roos explained that the U.S. side had its own problems with Congress as well as a problem with Hatoyama telling POTUS to trust him but not following through. Probed whether there was any way to get the deal done this year, Maehara said he was 100% sure that the SDP would not agree to go forward this year. Maehara also acknowledged that the odds of finding a viable alternative to the existing FRF plan were "virtually zero" but said his government needed to go through the process despite further damage it might do in Okinawa in getting Okinawans stirred up even more.

17. (S/NF) Maehara said that there were only two countries who enjoyed watching what was currently happening to the U.S.-Japan alliance-China and the DPRK. He revealed that while at APEC in Singapore recently, he heard from journalists that many ASEAN leaders told POTUS they were concerned about what was happening to the alliance.

18. (S/NF) Ultimately, Maehara concluded, PM Hatoyama is absolutely committed to the alliance. People may think Hatoyama may be setting the stage for a plan to have U.S. troops stationed in Japan only in emergency situations, but this is not the case at all, said Maehara. When asked how and when this message (of the DPJ's four-point plan on FRF) will be officially delivered, Maehara said the current intention is for the Foreign Minister to travel to Washington DC to deliver the message. Exactly when it would happen was unclear.

19. (SBU) Participants:

Ambassador Roos  
Yumiko Miyazaki (interpreter)

Minister Maehara  
Jun Nakahara (interpreter, Maehara's secretary)

110. (U) Ambassador Roos has cleared this cable.  
ROOS